

Neon Inkwell: Rez High
Episode 1 – Old School

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1. INT. CAVE

Narrow. Cold. Wet. The occasional drip of water.

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: Rez High.
Episode 1 - Old School**

The drips continue.

JO-C

**(calling out for
echo)**

Hello!

Is there anyone there?

DOGWOOD

Jo-C. Wait for us.

Dogwood is catching up, a bit breathy.

JO-C

**I've got a good feeling about this
one.**

DOGWOOD

**It's a long, dark tunnel with weird
goop all over the walls.**

JO-C

Yeah, why not.

**Reflex arrives too. The handheld scanner makes affirmative
BIP NOISES.**

REFLEX

**You're right. This is the way. The
bipper never lies, Dogwood.**

DOGWOOD

**And does your bipper say it's safe?
I don't want to die down here.**

JO-C

You never tell us where you do want to die. It's making it hard to plan.

The bips get louder and lets out a long beep.

REFLEX

It's here.

JO-C

Sounds like there's something really good under there.

DOGWOOD

It's not just the water making the bipper bip, is it?

REFLEX

Not unless that water's magnetic.

Jo-C wades into the water.

DOGWOOD

(alarmed)

What are you doing?

JO-C

I can't see through this water with my handlight. I'm going to feel about.

And she does.

DOGWOOD

What are you doing? That's disgusting.

JO-C

Reflex, can you pinpoint it with that thing?

REFLEX

Yes. It's... right there!

JO-C

Right here?

Jo-C wades towards it, then -

Jo-C plunges under the water,.

She gropes about down there for a few nervous seconds then -

Bursts back up!

JO-C

I found it.

REFLEX

What is it?

Jo-C plunges under again.

Underwater straining as she pulls free SOMETHING HEAVY.

Something is dredged, forced out, until -

BOOM! Jo is out of the water again. Heavy gasps.

REFLEX (cont'd)

What is it, Jo-C?

JO-C

**(getting breath
back)**

Slimy.

REFLEX

(eye roll)

What else.

JO-C

(strained)

Very heavy.

Jo-C trudges out of the water, then puts the HEAVY unit down on the cave floor. The friends hunch around it.

JO-C (cont'd)

What's that on the side?

REFLEX

**It says 'Rez High'
and then 'Welcome Back to the Best Days'. And then something else has worn off.**

JO-C

What do you think it is?

REFLEX

**I'll have to open it to find out.
I'm not doing that until I dry it off properly.**

DOGWOOD

(excited)

Do you remember when Kamet and Quartz found the video screen?

JO-C

This is much better than that.

DOGWOOD

Why?

JO-C

We know what a video screen is. We learn nothing from finding one of those. This is something mysterious.

DOGWOOD

(don't have a go)

Alright. But will this play video shows?

JO-C

Do you remember how that screen just got torn apart for chips and bits?

REFLEX

We needed zootron parts.

JO-C

Well, before we hand this over to get torn up too...

REFLEX

Yes, I do want a good look first.

DOGWOOD

And it's not dangerous?

JO-C

Why would it be dangerous?

REFLEX

The real problem will be getting it past my mum.

DOGWOOD

And the electric eye.

REFLEX

Well, the eye has been broken since two winters ago. But you don't know that. Dogwood.

DOGWOOD

Yes?

REFLEX

You don't know that.

DOGWOOD

If it's so 'very heavy'-

JO-C

And really slimy.

DOGWOOD

-then I vote Jo-C carries it.

REFLEX

She's got the muscles.

DOGWOOD

And that huge backpack.

REFLEX

**I'm sure she'll be suitably careful
with it.**

DOGWOOD

And it was all her idea.

REFLEX

**She's absolutely the right woman for
the job. Two out of three votes
carry it. And I'll deal with my mum.**

JO-C

**No, that's a terrible plan. Your mum
always knows when you're lying.**

DOGWOOD

**Jo-C, everyone knows when you're
lying.**

2. INT. WEIGH-IN STATION

MRS SEVEN
Come up Reflex.

REFLEX
Heya mum

JO-C
Hey, Mrs Seven.

MRS SEVEN
What's up with Jo-C?

JO-C
That puddle was a lot deeper than it looked.

MRS SEVEN
You stink, kid.

JO-C
Yeah, well, you live with Reflex.
You should be noseblind by now.

MRS SEVEN
I'll have you know my beautiful girl smells like fresh water.

JO-C
(a challenge)
Yeah? And what does that smell of?

REFLEX
Here's the haul, mum.

Mrs Seven tips out a carrying crate of junk and salvage.
Small bits, no Rez High.

MRS SEVEN
Oh. A lot of rust today. Loads of...

DOGWOOD

Rubbish.

MRS SEVEN

What happened to that big blip I sent you to?

JO-C

Whatever blipped, it wasn't there any more.

MRS SEVEN

Don't tell me the zootrons are on the blink again.

REFLEX

Probably a one-off. But I'll check it out tomorrow.

Mrs Seven is slipping into a funk. She exhales.

REFLEX (cont'd)

Mum? Mum? Don't worry.

MRS SEVEN

It got my hopes up. The size of that blip.

JO-C

We were all hopeful.

DOGWOOD

Nothing there.

REFLEX

If there was, we'd have found it.

MRS SEVEN

Maybe I will send Kamet and Quartz to check tomorrow.

JO-C

Be our guest.

REFLEX

Check the next scans, Mum. I bet the blip will be gone. A phantom blip.

JO-C

I know we used to find a lot more-

DOGWOOD

There's always tomorrow.

MRS SEVEN

Go on, you're holding up the queue.

REFLEX

I'll be in the scan hall at teatime, Mum.

DOGWOOD

See you later Mrs Seven.

They walk away, then at a safe distance:

JO-C

Let's go get this thing running.

REFLEX

I'll try.

JO-C

Thanks, Reflex.

REFLEX

Don't thank me yet. Let's meet after Tea, I'll see if I can get it working.

3. INT. BUG DOME

The low, constant sound of a million bugs wriggling, writhing, mating and feeding in huge vats.

The creak of the bug dome's trapdoor being pushed open.

Jo-C is already here, waiting. Dogwood climbs in.

JO-C

Hey.

DOGWOOD

Am I late?

JO-C

(yeah, but)

Reflex is even later.

DOGWOOD

I hate it up here. We should have met somewhere else.

JO-C

No way. Give me the top three reasons you hate the bug room.

DOGWOOD

One, it's all the way at the top of the climb. Two, it's always really muggy. And three, all these boxes of disgusting things screwing and then eating each other. It's revolting.

JO-C

And everybody else in River Mill agrees. This is the perfect place to meet in secret.

DOGWOOD

It's not like Reflex to be late.

JO-C

No, but it's a good sign. If the thing wouldn't work at all she'd have given up.

DOGWOOD

What do you think it is?

JO-C

Something absolutely ancient. I did try to work out what 'Rez High' might mean. But I couldn't.

DOGWOOD

Or me.

JO-C

Which makes it extra exciting.

DOGWOOD

Do you think it's something totally new?

JO-C

No. Something ancient. Something forgotten.

DOGWOOD

But something we've never seen before?

JO-C

Yeah. Filled with secrets from the past.

DOGWOOD

So you don't think we should just hand it over?

JO-C

No.

DOGWOOD

After what happened in the library.

A short but loaded pause is interrupted when the trapdoor creaks opens again.

REFLEX

Prepare to have your minds blown.

JO-C

Here we go! So what is it?

REFLEX

You've got to experience this for yourselves.

DOGWOOD

You're scaring me.

REFLEX

No, it's nothing to be worried about. I think it's probably just a toy.

JO-C

(overlapped)

A toy?

REFLEX

But not like any toy we've ever seen before.

JO-C

Let me see.

REFLEX

You'll do more than that. Sit down and get comfortable, both of you.

JO-C

(sit down?)

Okay.

They do sit, cross legged on the floor.

Reflex opens the case and hands out headbands.

REFLEX

I think we got really lucky. The case was pretty much watertight. Put this on your head.

DOGWOOD

Okay. On my head?

REFLEX

Yeah, around your head.

(to Jo-C)

And put yours on your head too. Like this.

DOGWOOD

This won't give me electric shocks, will it?

REFLEX

No.

DOGWOOD

I hope it doesn't make sudden noises.

REFLEX

It's nothing like that. But... before I switch it on, are you both comfortable?

JO-C

Yes.

DOGWOOD

Yeah.

REFLEX

See you inside!

4. INT. THE LOBBY

Inside the dream. The lobby in the sky, with diamonds of warm sunlight. A light blanket of ambient music cradles the soul.

DOGWOOD

Uh... what?

JO-C

This doesn't... where are we?

REFLEX

We're sitting on the floor in the bug dome.

DOGWOOD

I can't hear the bugs.

REFLEX

(proud)

Or see them, or smell them, or smell Jo-C.

JO-C

Am I... dreaming?

REFLEX

That's it. Something like that.

JO-C

Are you seeing what I'm seeing?

REFLEX

That will depend on what you're seeing.

JO-C

A big frame?

DOGWOOD

Yeah, like a steamy window.

A voice speaks up.

HEAD

**Character Creation. Welcome back,
Reflex.**

JO-C

Who's that?

REFLEX

**It's the thing. The Rez High. It
talks. And understands what you say
back to it.**

HEAD

**New players. To create your
character, step up to the mirror and
imagine yourself.**

JO-C

**(oh, I get it now)
It's a mirror.**

DOGWOOD

Why am I so blurry?

REFLEX

**It looks in your mind, I think. So
imagine yourself. Let it see.**

JO-C

Then why am I dressed like this?

REFLEX

**Pretty much everybody here is. All
the youngers. It must be some kind
of costume.**

JO-C

What do you mean 'everybody here'?

DOGWOOD

(excited)

Who's here?

HEAD

Character Creation complete. Would you like to play the tutorial?

DOGWOOD

Yes!

REFLEX

Steady on, Dogwood.

Now the tone shifts. Upbeat music plays. An indestructible game theme from a long-lost age.

Then, like the introduction to Jurassic Park:

HEAD

Welcome to Rez High.

The theme ends. Somewhere impossible, a school bell rings.

HEAD (cont'd)

It's the first morning of the new term. But before class begins, there's still some time to explore. Meet a few of the other students and take a look around. When you're ready for the school day to begin, head to class and I'll take care of the rest.

JO-C

Not exactly plain English, was it.

DOGWOOD

I'm up for a look around, anyway.

JO-C

Reflex, where did all those people over there come from? Who are they?

REFLEX

**They're not real. They're part of
the dream.**

DOGWOOD

**What a waste of a dream. Where's all
the sword fighting and... and...**

REFLEX

Sex?

DOGWOOD

I was going to say kissing.

JO-C

Sure.

They're making their way closer to the virtual pupils.

REFLEX

**I wasn't absolutely convinced I'd
get the same thing again but this is
exactly what happened to me. As if
this particular dream is stored on
this machine.**

JO-C

**Like a recording of a dream - or a
memory?**

REFLEX

Maybe?

JO-C

An ancient place and ancient people.

REFLEX

It might be.

JO-C

This is not what I expected.

NPC ROBBIE

Watch out, new kids.

JO-C

Hello, ancient kid.

NPC CATHY

**Watch your backs. Mad Monk is about.
He finds every new kid sooner or
later.**

DOGWOOD

And then what?

NPC ROBBIE

You'll find out.

**The three friends split up but don't go far. Each talks to
a different group of pupils.**

REFLEX

Hello. Can I ask you something?

NPC BENNY

What do you want?

REFLEX

Just to ask a few things, if-

NPC BENNY

What do you want?

REFLEX

Where is this?

NPC BENNY

**Reschester High. The crappiest
comprehensive this side of the
river.**

REFLEX

Right. What's a comprehensive?

NPC BENNY

I don't know what you mean.

REFLEX

What do you mean by comprehensive?
Comprehensive what? Comprehensive
how?

NPC BENNY

Shut up.

REFLEX

(you're nuts)

Okay. Thank you.

Jo-C finds another student to talk to.

JO-C

Hello. I'd love to ask you a few
questions.

NPC SAMMY

Alright.

JO-C

Where am I?

NPC SAMMY

This is Reschester High.

JO-C

And what do you do here?

NPC SAMMY

Check your timetable.

JO-C

Check what?

NPC SAMMY

Check your timetable.

Reflex persists with their research.

REFLEX

Hello. What's a comprehensive?

NPC LUCY

I don't know what you mean.

REFLEX

You either, then.

(turns to another)

Hello, do you know what a comprehensive is?

NPC TIMMY

Piss off, dork.

Dogwood simply says hello to passing pupils.

DOGWOOD

Hello.

PUPIL ONE

Hello.

DOGWOOD

Hello.

PUPIL TWO

Hello.

DOGWOOD

Hi there.

PUPIL THREE

Hello.

DOGWOOD

Oh.

From behind his back:

LIVIA

Hello. Are you new here?

DOGWOOD

Very new. I'm not sure what I'm doing yet.

LIVIA

What do you want to do?

DOGWOOD

I don't know even what my options are.

LIVIA

Okay, what would you like to do?

DOGWOOD

Eat something?

LIVIA

That, I can help you with. There's a thing called a tuck shop just around there. I would take you but this wheelchair is absolutely rubbish at steps.

You'll find some money in your pocket. Try a Rhubarb and Custard!

DOGWOOD

**I'll check it out. Smart one.
Thanks.**

Elsewhere, Jo-C is in the middle of a rapid-fire back and forth.

JO-C

What year is it?

NPC ROBBIE

1979. Don't you know anything?

JO-C

Not about 1979. Wow. What can you tell me?

NPC ROBBIE

I don't know what you mean.

JO-C

I want you to tell me what happened.

NPC ROBBIE

What happened?

JO-C

What happened to all of you. Why there's only River Mill left now. Tell me about history.

NPC ROBBIE

3B is where we have history.

JO-C

What's 3B?

NPC ROBBIE

3B is where we have history.

JO-C

And where is that?

NPC ROBBIE

Don't you know anything?

JO-C

Would you please just tell me how to find this history place?

NPC ROBBIE

Are you looking for Classroom 3B?

JO-C

Classroom 3B. Finally. Thank you.

NPC ROBBIE

It's in block three, over there.

(half a beat)

Don't you know anything?

Elsewhere. Reflex goes from student to student.

REFLEX

Hello, would you mind if I ask you a few questions?

NPC CATHY

Yes, I would.

REFLEX

How about you?

NPC WEBSTER

Hello. What would you like to know?

REFLEX

What's a comprehensive?

NPC WEBSTER

According to The Concise Oxford English Dictionary, comprehensive is an adjective meaning 'including all, or almost all, the items, details, facts, information, et cetera, that may be involved'.

REFLEX

That's amazing. Have you memorised the entire dictionary?

NPC WEBSTER

Knowledge is power, my friend.

REFLEX

Do you know the noun version too?

NPC WEBSTER

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, comprehensive is a noun meaning 'a secondary school for young people of all levels of ability'.

REFLEX

**You're very handy. Okay, next...
What's a 'secondary school'?**

5. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR

Jo-C bumps into Dogwood.

JO-C

Hey, what are you eating?

DOGWOOD

(chewing)

Some sort of little sweet pill. It's called Rhubarb Custard, I think. It's very chewy. Do you want one?

JO-C

How do you know it's safe to eat?

DOGWOOD

(well, duh)

Because this is just a dream.

JO-C

Have you seen Classroom 3B anywhere?

DOGWOOD

I doubt it.

JO-C

But you're not sure?

DOGWOOD

I saw a girl in a wheelchair and a grumpy woman who has her own place full of food called 'tuck shop'. But nothing with 3B on it.

JO-C

'Classroom 3B' is where these people keep their history.

(turns)

Excuse me.

NPC MONK

What do you want, new kid?

JO-C

Could you help me find Classroom 3B?

NPC MONK

Why should I tell you anything?

DOGWOOD

Because she asked you nicely?

Monk grabs Dogwood by his lapels.

NPC MONK

Alright, smartarse.

JO-C

(ancient slang!)

Smartarse!

NPC MONK

**Why shouldn't I just drag you into
the bogs and flush your head?**

DOGWOOD

**I'd have a much better comeback if I
knew what any of that meant.**

NPC MONK

Are you taking the mick?

A booming interruption as a teacher approaches:

NPC MR PRIZE

Buddy Monk! Unhand that young man.

JO-C

**Buddy Monk? Are you related to Mad
Monk?**

NPC MONK

Call me that to my face again.

JO-C

(er)

Buddy Monk...?

NPC MR PRIZE

Come on, off with you, Monk. And you, new kids, let this be a lesson to you. Stay out of trouble.

DOGWOOD

It's not up to us, apparently.

JO-C

We will. Thank you. But before you go, could you help us find Classroom 3B?

Mr Prize walks off, Monk in tow.

JO-C (cont'd)

No? Hello? The history place, 3B?

Reflex calls over from a few yards away.

REFLEX

Jo-C, this door has 3H written on it. I think we're on the right track.

DOGWOOD

This one is 3F. Must be this way.

REFLEX

Stop.

JO-C

What? What is it?

REFLEX

Quiet.

JO-C

Okay.

REFLEX
Ssshhhh. Listen.

JO-C
I don't hear anything.

REFLEX
Exactly. It's too quiet. I think we
should wake up and get out here.
Something might be wrong and I
should real-

A HARD AND ANGRY static burst brings us back to:

6. INT. BUG DOME

REFLEX (cont'd)
(wakes up talking)
-ly check...

DOGWOOD
You promised no sudden loud noises.

JO-C
Where did it go?

REFLEX
I'm going to look into it.

Reflex gets right to checking out the unit - opening covers to the gentle fizz of smoking wires.

As a burst of smoke billows out, coughs and reactions.

REFLEX (cont'd)
Let's get on the safe side. Take those off your heads.

DOGWOOD
You're scaring me again.

JO-C
Please tell me the Rez High isn't broken.

REFLEX
I think I could fix it.

JO-C
Thank luck.

REFLEX
Could. If I had the right parts. But I don't have the right parts. See these three little valves?

JO-C

Not through all the smoke, no.

REFLEX

They're the things making the smoke. Little valves where the headbits plug into the main unit. These are the only open part of the whole machine. They must have got wet. I can bypass them but I would need to run the connections through, I guess, Q-bits instead.

DOGWOOD

There were Q-bits in the library.

REFLEX

Don't remind me.

DOGWOOD

Where can we get them now?

REFLEX

We can't. We've picked the moors clean. I don't remember the last time we found anything Q-generation out there.

JO-C

Don't we have anything like that around River Mill?

REFLEX

I repaired most of the zootrons with Q-bits before now. But I'm not getting those back.

(self mimicry)

'Mum, can I borrow one of the last zootrons, just for a minute? Oops, I've only gone and broken it. Sorry... but I guess you won't need these Q-bits now'.

(back to casual)

**Unless one of you has been keeping a
secret map tracker or Music Man
under your floorboards, I can't do
anything.**

(disappointed beat)

**I guess we'll just hand over the Rez
High next time we weigh in and enjoy
all the time credits we'll get for
it.**

DOGWOOD

(despondent)

**There were loads more things at tuck
shop I wanted to try.**

JO-C

Did you say Music Man, Reflex?

REFLEX

**Please don't tell me you've got one
hidden in your room.**

JO-C

**No, of course not. I don't keep
secrets from you, Reflex.**

DOGWOOD

(subtle, but there)

Hmph.

JO-C

But I do have a plan.

7. INT. BAR

Less than a dozen patrons. No music. Chat and a game of darts - or something very like it.

Jo-C and Kamet sit at a table in the back corner.

KAMET

So you want me to crack open the centuries old, miraculously intact Music Man I risked my life to rescue from a collapsing, rotting building out on floodlands, rip out its precious little Q-bit and just give it to you?

JO-C

Ah, you don't really like music anyway. Yours is not the face of somebody who understands fun.

KAMET

Don't flatter me.

JO-C

Kamet, if you give me that Q-bit, then I'll never be able tell anyone you've got it.

KAMET

And I suppose, if I'm the one to give it you, then I won't be able to rat you out either. Is that it?

JO-C

This is what they used to call mutually assured destruction.

KAMET

(teasing Jo-C's
rep)

I'd forgotten you were River Mill's leading scholar of ancient history.

What are you going to do with a Q-bit anyway?

Quartz returns from the bar.

QUARTZ

You're still here, Jo-C. I'm sorry I didn't get you a pint.

JO-C

Don't worry Quartz. I'll be on my way.

KAMET

Jo-C's not old enough for ale, Quartz.

QUARTZ

You're not?

JO-C

It tastes disgusting anyway.

Quartz isn't sure who to appeal to: Jo-C or Kamet.

QUARTZ

It does taste funny.

KAMET

Then why do you drink it?

QUARTZ

I don't know. Did you get what you want, Jo-C?

JO-C

Did I get what I want, Kamet?

QUARTZ

What does she want?

JO-C

I forget...

KAMET

**Perhaps if you see your friend
Reflex later you'll get a handy
little reminder.**

JO-C

**Perfect. See you on the moors, boys.
Enjoy your ales.**

8. INT. BUG DOME

Much later.

Jo-C, Reflex and Dogwood are sitting around the Rez High unit, headbands on. Bugs do bug things in the vats all around them.

REFLEX

If you don't repeat the instructions back to me I'll never know you were listening.

JO-C

The valves burned up so you've bypassed them with a Q-bit. But this bypass means the Rez High can't wake us up automatically any more.

REFLEX

But what were the actual instructions?

JO-C

We get out by walking through the school gates. It's that simple. We wake up by walking out of the dream.

DOGWOOD

Can we run through the gates instead?

REFLEX

Sure.

DOGWOOD

Can I jump through them if I like?

REFLEX

You can ride over them on the back of zootron if that's what you want. Just get yourself through those gates.

JO-C

**See, we were listening to the
instructions. And the warnings-**

DOGWOOD

Go on, hit the button.

REFLEX

See you inside.

Reflex flips the switch.

9. INT. THE LOBBY

Into the otherworldly EQ of virtual infinity.

The short version of the Rez High theme plays.

HEAD

**Mission One, Kiss Chase. Your crush
wants to meet you. Escape your
class, find your crush and kiss
them. Good luck!**

**The theme ends and the school bell takes us into Rez High
proper -**

10. INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The beginning of a class. A clock ticks on the wall. Twenty bored students fidget in their seats. Dogwood's at the back.

NPC MR HAYWARD

Good morning class. Today we will be working from our textbooks. Please turn to chapter 38.

DOGWOOD

Jo-C?

NPC LUCY

Sshh.

NPC MR HAYWARD

Quiet at the back of class.

NPC LUCY

Here's a note for you.

DOGWOOD

Oh. Okay.

**(reads the note,
then)**

So how do I get to the 'bike sheds'?

NPC LUCY

When I want to bunk off, I say I badly need the loo.

DOGWOOD

The what?

(to teacher)

Hello. Hi. I need the loo.

NPC MR HAYWARD

Class has only just started, child. You can wait.

DOGWOOD

I do need it badly.

NPC MR HAYWARD

Go if you must. But no dilly dallying.

Dogwood gets up to leave.

DOGWOOD

Great. What way is the bike shed?

NPC MR HAYWARD

What are you talking about? Get out of here, boy.

11. INT. CLASSROOM

An identical class gets underway in an identical way, except this time it's Reflex at the back.

NPC MR HAYWARD (cont'd)

Good morning class. Today we will be working from our text books. Please turn to chapter 38-

Reflex crashes MR Hayward's line.

REFLEX

(projecting)

Excuse me, can I leave?

NPC MR HAYWARD

Why, girl?

REFLEX

You're looking for some kind of credible excuse, aren't you? Like I need to use the toilet. Or get some kind of medical assistance?

NPC MR HAYWARD

Do you need some kind of medical assistance?

REFLEX

(go on then)

Yes. Yes I do.

NPC MR HAYWARD

Go if you must. But no dilly dallying.

NPC LUCY

Before you go. Here's a note for you.

Reflex takes a quick look.

REFLEX
Brilliant. Thank you.

12. INT. CLASSROOM

**An third iteration of the same class, same audio run-in.
This time it's Jo-C at the back.**

NPC MR HAYWARD

**Good morning class. Today we will be
working from our text books. Please
turn to chapter 38.**

**Overlapping, Jo-C stands and makes her way towards the
door.**

NPC MR HAYWARD (cont'd)

What are you doing, girl?

JO-C

**I have to go to find my 'crush'.
Apparently I'm supposed to kiss
them.**

NPC MR HAYWARD

**Not during my lesson you don't. Sit
down.**

JO-C

(sigh-moan-whine)

How long is your lesson?

NPC MR HAYWARD

**Any more of this insolence and
you'll get detention.**

JO-C

It's really long, isn't it?

NPC MR HAYWARD

**Back in your seat, girl, or it's off
to the headmistress with you.**

JO-C
(hopeful)

Is the headmistress outside of this room?

NPC MR HAYWARD

Right, that's it. Off to Mrs Sexton with you.

JO-C

Thank luck. And thank you.

13. INT. CORRIDOR

Reflex walks along a corridor, looking for help.

REFLEX

**Hello. I'm looking for a bike shed
but I don't know for sure what that
is.**

NPC SUSY

Don't you know anything?

REFLEX

(to self)

I used to think I did...

Tommy walks on, Reflex approaches a teacher.

REFLEX (cont'd)

**Hello. Can you tell me what a bike
shed is?**

NPC MR MASON

Shouldn't you be in class?

REFLEX

That would depend on who you ask.

14. INT. CORRIDOR

Another corridor.

DOGWOOD

You look helpful. What's a bike shed?

NPC WEBSTER

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, bikeshed is a noun meaning 'an enclosed structure where bicycles may be stored'.

DOGWOOD

Huh. And now I know.

NPC WEBSTER

Knowledge is power, my friend.

DOGWOOD

Yeah! What's a 'bicycle'-'?

The conversation is crashed hard by Mrs Judge:

NPC MRS JUDGE

You there. Do you have a hall pass?

DOGWOOD

Sorry.

(can't help you)

I don't even know what that is.

NPC MRS JUDGE

I'll need to see your hall pass.

DOGWOOD

You could ask the kid with the glasses. He's definitely the most helpful one round here.

NPC MRS JUDGE

If you don't show me your hall pass,

I'll have to send you back to class.

Livia - sneaking up from an angle, again - interjects.

LIVIA

Here you go. His hall pass. He must have dropped it on the floor. And here's mine.

NPC MRS JUDGE

Okay. This time. But no dilly dallying.

DOGWOOD

Nobody wants me to dilly dally.

LIVIA

I wouldn't mind if you did.

NPC MRS JUDGE

And no running in the corridors.

LIVIA

(slight edge)

I won't be *running* anywhere.

DOGWOOD

Thank you. You came just in time.

LIVIA

Come on. I'm going to the bike shed too. Though we'll have to go the long way round.

DOGWOOD

More steps?

LIVIA

They're really not as useful as most people think. What's your name?

DOGWOOD

Dogwood.

LIVIA

Do you want to ask me my name?

DOGWOOD

Yeah, course. What's your name?

LIVIA

**I'm Livia. It's really lovely to
meet you, Dogwood.**

15. INT. CORRIDOR

Jo-C hurries up to a student.

JO-C
Where is Classroom 3B?

NPC SAMMY
Don't you know? 3B is in block three.

JO-C
(defensive)
I'm new here. Where's block three?

NPC SAMMY
It's by the playground.

JO-C
Where's this 'playground', then?

NPC SAMMY
It's over by block three.

JO-C
Which is where?

NPC SAMMY
What do you mean?

JO-C
Where is block three?

NPC SAMMY
It's by the playground.

JO-C
Useless.

Reflex arrives, greatly relieved to find Jo-C.

REFLEX

Jo-C. There you are. I didn't know it was going to split us up like that.

JO-C

You're not with Dogwood?

REFLEX

No. I was in a classroom. And now I'm looking for a 'bike shed'. How about you?

JO-C

I'm looking for Classroom 3B. It's apparently a history place of some kind.

REFLEX

Is that where your crush is going to be?

JO-C

No...

REFLEX

Didn't you hear what the voice said?

JO-C

Yeah, but history.

REFLEX

I don't think we can just wander about.

JO-C

Can we just at least try?

REFLEX

Look how this whole thing works. It's much more restrictive than a real place. I want to find our crushes to see what that does.

JO-C

But I don't even know what a bike shed is.

REFLEX

We'll get the dictionary kid to tell us.

JO-C

**I've got so many questions for him.
Come on, let's go this way.**

(notices, admires)

Hey, your hair. Did you give yourself a haircut?

REFLEX

I suppose I was a bit more honest with the mirror this time.

JO-C

Nice.

REFLEX

I thought I could look... a bit more the way I see myself.

JO-C

It really suits you. You look great.

REFLEX

(reassured)

Thank you.

Reflex tries to return the favour and reassure Jo-C:

REFLEX (cont'd)

Maybe the next mission will be about your history place.

JO-C

This is so gross. We have to kiss this crush character if we want to

get anywhere. Didn't the people who made this care if, you know, people actually want to be kissed?

REFLEX

They're just dreams, Jo-C. They don't want anything.

JO-C

I'm not a dream. And I can't really kiss someone else without them kissing me too. Though I'm sure Dogwood's having the time of his life.

REFLEX

Maybe think of it like you're pretending to kiss somebody. Somebody who isn't even there. Like playing a game. I think it's supposed to be fun?

(oh, I see)

You've bought me all the way to your Class 3B.

JO-C

Blind luck, I promise. But while we're here...

She tries the door.

JO-C (cont'd)

The spitting door's locked.

16. EXT. PLAYGROUND

Livia and Dogwood make their way towards the bike shed.

DOGWOOD

Everyone here is so miserable.

LIVIA

I know.

DOGWOOD

But you're...

LIVIA

I'm?

DOGWOOD

Not.

LIVIA

Not right now anyway.

DOGWOOD

Me either.

From out of the blue, like a stalking beast:

MR GROAN

Boy. Where are you going?

DOGWOOD

Oh. We're just...

MR GROAN

Shouldn't you be in class?

LIVIA

He has a hall pass.

MR GROAN

Come on, Livia. You shouldn't be here.

DOGWOOD

Who's this guy?

She searches for the best answer, just for half a beat.

LIVIA

Mr Groan.

DOGWOOD

And who does he think he is?

MR GROAN

**I'm a teacher, boy. I'm in charge.
So do you really want to push your
luck with me? Move it along, Livia.**

LIVIA

I have to go, Dogwood.

DOGWOOD

I'll see you later.

MR GROAN

Not if I see you first.

**Dogwood continues across the playground, around the bike
shed and is surprised by what he sees there.**

DOGWOOD

Oh. Hey.

NPC IZZY

**Hello Dogwood. I've been waiting for
you.**

DOGWOOD

Shall I kiss you?

NPC IZZY

Right down to business. I like it.

DOGWOOD

Yeah, very romantic. But why not.

NPC IZZY

Why not.

DOGWOOD

I'll try anything once.

NPC IZZY

I'm very glad to hear it.

And so they kiss - awkwardly.

The 'Success!' version of the theme plays as the Head talks.

HEAD

Congratulations. Your crush is now yours, body and soul, until the end of term. Or until somebody more fit comes along, whichever happens first. Mission One complete.

17. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR

REFLEX

I told you, some areas are out of bounds just because of the mission we're doing.

JO-C

So history is being held hostage unless I kiss somebody to get it. Slagging crudlark.

An error beep starts. It's breaking into the simulation from the outside, a notification from the Rez High system itself.

JO-C (cont'd)

What's that?

REFLEX

Let me listen.

HEAD

(overlapping)

Rez High has encountered issues and needs to restart. The system will shut down in 90 seconds. Please log out to ensure a smooth transition.

JO-C

Do you think Dogwood can hear this?

REFLEX

I'm not sure he'll listen to it. Come on.

Reflex hurries off, leading Jo-C away.

JO-C

(fast walk)

Where are we going?

REFLEX

(fast walk)

**The bike shed. We've got to find
Dogwood, quick, and chances are,
he's where the kissing is.**

They race along the corridor -

JO-C

(jogging)

**Let me go, you get out. I'm much
faster than you.**

REFLEX

(jogging)

No, I'm coming too.

- then push through doors -

18. EXT. PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

- into the playground.

JO-C
(running)
Just go.

REFLEX
(running)
Why?

JO-C
(running)
You might be able to do something
from the outside.

Reflex considers it as they hurry along, then Reflex stops:

REFLEX
(just stopped)
Okay. You're right. But if you get
to the bike shed and he's not there,
don't wait a second longer. I don't
want to take any chances with a
machine that's plugged straight into
your brain.

JO-C
(recently stopped)
Go now! You're not so fast.

They split up. Jo-C barrels her way to the bike shed -

Where she catches her breath, then comes face to face with
her crush.

JO-C (cont'd)
Dogwood?

NPC JENNY
Jo-C. I've been waiting for you.

JO-C

Have you seen Dogwood?

NPC JENNY

I only have eyes for you.

JO-C

Dogwood? He was coming here to meet his crush.

NPC JENNY

Oh, him. He was here with Izzy. They were snogging.

JO-C

And where did they go?

NPC JENNY

(cannot comprehend)

What do you mean?

Jo-C's head is filled with another alert:

HEAD

Please log out now to ensure a smooth transition.

JO-C

After that, where did they go?

NPC JENNY

I don't know what you mean.

HEAD

Log out now.

JO-C

I mean where are they now?

NPC JENNY

I don't know what you mean.

JO-C

Of course you don't. Were all you ancient people this stupid?

NPC JENNY

(affronted)

Ancient? I'm fourteen.

JO-C

You're a waste of time.

Jo-C tears off -

Then 89 SECONDS AFTER THE ALERT FIRST SOUNDED, she bursts through the gates into an electrifying WALL OF STATIC.

19. INT. BUG DOME - CONTINUOUS

Jo-C comes up for air - not unlike when she burst out of the water in the cave

REFLEX

Oh, thank luck. Jo-C.

Jo-C pulls off her headset and turns to Dogwood:

JO-C

(in shock)

No. Oh no.

REFLEX

He's alright. I think he's just sleeping.

JO-C

Have you tried to wake him up?

REFLEX

He won't wake up. Yet. I'm restarting the unit-

SLAP! Jo-C wallops Dogwood across the face. NOTHING.

JO-C

That usually works.

REFLEX

The Rez High has restarted.

JO-C

He's still the same.

Jo-C pulls her headset on again.

JO-C (cont'd)

I have to go back. Push the button.

Reflex flips the switch.

20. INT. THE LOBBY

WHOOSH - back to the edge of infinity.

HEAD

Rez High requires a download. Please connect your unit to the ethersphere and restart.

JO-C

Start, you slagging crudlark.

HEAD

Instruction not understood. Please connect your unit to the ethersphere and-

Jo-C desperately tries imperative voice commands for the system, cutting off its message each time.

JO-C

Restart.

HEAD

Instruction not-

JO-C

Connect to the ethersphere.

HEAD

Instruction n-

JO-C

Wake up Dogwood.

HEAD

Instruction not understood.

JO-C

Why are you like this?

21. INT. BUG DOME - CONTINUOUS

Jo-C falls out of the virtual world, back to reality.

REFLEX

(panicked)

**I'll work this out, I promise. I
just need to think.**

But Jo-C has a plan she wants to check:

JO-C

**The Rez High needs a download. If I
take it to the wireless spire, can I
connect it to the ethersphere?**

REFLEX

Great. I'll do it.

JO-C

**No way. Stay here with Dogwood. I
trust you to look after him better
than I would. And, anyway, whoever's
going has to get past your mum.
You'll just have to tell me how to
connect the unit. And let's be quick
about it because luck knows what
Dogwood's going through.**

22. INT. CORRIDOR

THIS is what Dogwood's going through:

NPC ROBBIE

Dogwood. Mad Monk is looking for you.

DOGWOOD

Mad Monk?

(who the heck is that)

Does he look like a monk?

NPC CATHY

He's going to clobber you if he catches you.

DOGWOOD

Then what should I do?

NPC CATHY

You can run.

NPC ROBBIE

Or you can hide.

NPC CATHY

But whatever you're going to do, do it now.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

Rez High is a Neon Inkwell podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-alike 4.0 International License.

The series is written and created by Brendon Connelly and directed by Lucy Wray.

This episode was edited with original music by Katharine Seaton and mastered by Catherine Rinella.

It featured Olivia Hirst as Jo-C, George Bunting as Dogwood, Lozza Gilbert as Reflex, Kazeem Tosin Amore as Head, Beth Alsbury as

Livia, Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Groan, Christine Walsh as Mrs. Seven, Shahan Hamza as Kamet, and William Killgore as Quartz.

A full list of cast and credits is available in the shownotes.

Neon Inkwell is produced by April Sumner with Executive Producer Alexander J Newall and Showrunner Elizabeth Moffatt.

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Thanks for listening.